

- 1 1. An electrically conductive composition which comprises:  
2 a plurality of polymeric complexes; each polymeric complex comprising:  
3 a strand of a  $\pi$ -conjugated polymer; and  
4 a strand of a polyelectrolyte, the polyelectrolyte being non-covalently bonded to  
5 the  $\pi$ -conjugated polymer and having at least one reactive functional group, the reactive  
6 functional group facilitating the cross-linkage between the polymeric complexes when  
7 the complexes are heated.
- 1 2. The composition of claim 1 wherein the  $\pi$ -conjugated polymer is selected from  
2 the group consisting of polyaniline, polypyrrole, polyacetylene and polythiophene.
- 1 3. The composition of claim 2 wherein the polyelectrolyte is selected from the group  
2 consisting of poly(butadiene-co-maleic acid), poly(vinylmethylether-co-maleic acid),  
3 poly(acrylic acid), poly(ethylmethacrylate-co-acrylic acid) and poly(acrylamide-co-  
4 acrylic acid).
- 1 4. The composition of 3 wherein the polyelectrolyte has a backbone and the  
2 functional group comprises:  
3 at least one unsaturated double bond in the polymer backbone of the  
4 polyelectrolyte.
- 1 5. The composition of claim 4 wherein the functional group comprises at least one  
2 pendent group selected from the group consisting of carboxylic acid groups, hydroxy  
3 groups, amine groups, amide groups, nitrile groups, aldehyde groups and ketone groups.

1 6. The composition of claim 5 wherein there are at least two functional groups and  
2 each functional group reacts with each other or optionally with each other and a  
3 functional group from other polymeric complexes or optionally with each other and with  
4 the functional groups of other polymeric complexes.

1 7. The composition of claim 6 wherein the polymeric complexes are water-borne or  
2 optionally are dispersible in organic solvents.